

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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INFO USINT ALGIERS

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AOEMBASSY TEL AVIV 4084

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T CAIRO 7757

EXDIS

USUN PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.T. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, US

SUBJECT: GLOOM IS BACKDROP FOR OCTOBER 6 CELEBRATIONS

SUMMARY. EGYPTIANS BEGIN NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF "CROSSING" OF CANAL ON OCT 6.

NATIONAL MOOD, HOWEVER, IS ONE OF GLOOM AND BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT. EGYTIAN PUBLIC, WHICH BELIEVES CEASEFIRE CAME AT TIME OF IMMINENT VICTORY IN SINAI, SEES NO TANGIBLE EVIDENCE FROM "PATH OF NEGOTIATION" OTHER THAN DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WHICH IS INCREASINGLY VIEWED AS GIVEAWAY. HOPES ARE HIGH THAT SECRETARY'S UPCOMING TRIP WILL SPARK MOVEMENT QUICKLY, ESPECIALLY IN SINAI. IF HOPES ARE DASHED, GOE MAY BEGIN RE-THINK PEACE STRATEGY. END SUMMARY.

1. SECRETARY KISSINGER WILL ARRIVE IN EGYPT DURING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE "MOST GLORIOUS" CHAPTER OF THE REPUBLIC'S MILITARY HISTORY--THE CROSSING OF THE CANAL. PREPARATIONS FOR OCTOBER 6, OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED ARMED FORCES DAY,

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LAVISH, BUT JUST BELOW THE SURFACE IS AN UNMISTAKABLE ATMOSPHERE OF GLOOM, FRUSTRATION AND DISAPPOINTMENT WHICH PERVADES BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS. ONE YEAR HAS PASSED, AND DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT IS THE ONLY VISIBLE RESULT OF VAST MAJORITY OF EGYTIANS REGARD AS MILITARY "VIMTORY".

2. MANY EGYPTIANS, PROBABLY INCLUDING FAHMY HIMSELF, HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT USG'S EFFORTS TO OBTAIN FINAL CEASEFIRE ROBBED EGYTIANS OF DECISIVE VICTORY IN SINAI. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS, DATT HAS FOUND THAT EVEN THEY HAVE BEGUN TO REPRESS MEMORY OF DESPERATE PLIGHT OF THIRD ARMY ON OCTOBER 24. GAMASY IN TALK WITH AMBASSADOR OCT 1 WAS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF DISENEGAGMENT AGREEMENT AND LACK OF MOVEMENT ON ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM.

(DATT IS PREPARING SEPARATE MESSAGE ON MOOD OF ARMED FORCES.)

3. WORRY ABOUT LACK OF TANGIBLE MOVEMENT TOWARD PEACE IS BY NO MEANS CONFINED TO MILITARY. ON OCTOBER 1, FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT OF SECRETARY'S ME ITINERARY, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENTS OF MAJOR CAIRO DAILIES CALLED POLITICAL OFFICER TO ASK WHETHER SECRETARY WOULD BRING WITH HIM SINAI WITHDRAWAL PROPOSAL.

4. SADAT HIMSELF IN RECENT SPEECHES HAS REITERATED GOE WILL NOT ENTERTAIN NOTION OF "SEPARATE PEACE", AND EGYPTIANS WOULD IN FACT NOT WISH TO ABANDON SYRIA. NEVERTHELESS, PUBLIC OPINION IS CLEAR ON SINAI; EGYPTIANS WANT AL-'ARISH AND ABU RODEIS OILFIELD BACK FAST.

5. WE ARE INFORMED THAT SOVIETS ARE ATTEMPTING TO SCORE PROPAGANDA POINTS BASED ON PUBLIC BELIEF THAT US-GOE RELATIONSHIP HAS SO FAR BORNE LITTLE FRUIT. ONE EGYPTIAN TELLS US SOVIETS HAVE BEEN REMARKING THAT THERE WERE NO GRAVE COMMODITY SHORTAGES DURING SOVIET-EGYPTIAN HONEYMOON.

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BLATANTLY UNTRUE, BUT MEMORIES ARE SHORT.) FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT WITH EXCELLENT SOVIET CONTACTS TELLS US SOVIET LINE ON TRIPARTITE COMMUNIQUE IS THAT CLAUSE RULING OUT PARTIAL PEACE AGREEMENTS MEANS USG'S STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH IS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE TO GOE.

6. DOMESTIC ECONOMIC CRISIS IS ANOTHER PROBLEM FOR US. EGYPT-

ANS ASK WHERE IS AMERICAN WHEAT, PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND FERTILIZER THEY NEED SO BADLY. THEY WILL SOON BE ASKING WHAT HAPPENED TO PROMISED \$250 MILLION. (THERE IS WIDESPREAD AWARENESS OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF US AID TO ISRAEL.) ALTHOUGH ARAB MONEY HAS NOT FLOWED INTO EGYPT IN HOPED-FOR QUANTITIES EITHER, EGYPTIAN PUBLIC IS CONCERNED NOW ABOUT COMMODITY SHORTAGES; EGYPTIAN-US RAPPROCHMENT WAS LITERALLY EXPECTED TO RESULT IN BETTER BREAD. BREAD IS STILL THIRD RATE.

7. IN SHORT, EGYPTIANS ARE IN PESSIMISTIC FRAME OF MIND AND ARE LOOKING FORWARD WITH EAGERNESS TO SECRETARY'S VISIT. JOURNALISTS POINT OUT THAT IN PAST HE HAS COME TO ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE ME. THIS TIME HE IS ON FIXED SCHEDULE. THEREFORE, THEY CONCLUDE, HE IS COMING WITH SPECIFIC PLAN FOR "NEXT STEP". EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGH THAT THIS STEP WILL INVOLVE ISRAELI ROLL-BACK SOMEWHERE SOON. IF EXPECTATIONS ARE DASHED,; US CREDIBILITY AND THEREFORE SETTLEMENT EFFORTS WILL INEVITABLY SUFFER.

IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE ARE FEW ALTERNATIVES TO WHICH GOE CAN TURN. EGYPTIANS KNOW THAT SOVIETS, FOR ONE, CANNOT DELIVER ISRAEL AND WILL NOT PROVIDE MAJOR OFFENSIVE WEAPONRY; HENCE, THEY ARE NOT REALISTIC RECOURSE. ONE WHICH MAY TAKE ON GREATER ATTRACTION IS A RETURN TO MORE AGGRESSIVE, SELF-INITIATED, POLITICAL OFFENSIVE AS A FIRST STEP. SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS ARE OPENLY STATING THAT IF NEGOTIATING PROCESS REMAINS STALLED, WAR WILL BE THE ONLY RECOURSE. THOUGH SOME OF THIS IS BLUSTER, MANY EGYPTIAN SENIOR OFFICERS HAVE CONVINCED THEMSELVES THAT THIS IS A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE. IN ORDER TO CONTAIN THESE PRESSURES, SADAT NEEDS EARLY ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, CERTAINLY BEFORE HIS VISIT TO US.

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